

removably attaching an overlay to the first surface in a first position or the second surface in a second position of the main body with at least two fasteners attached to the overlay, each fastener passing through an oversized hole in the overlay and movably secured to the overlay with a washer, each washer spacing the overlay from the main body when the overlay is attached to the main body.

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 are presently pending.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

The Examiner rejected Claims 17-21, 25-28, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding Claim 17, the Examiner states that "it is unclear how the overlay is attachable to the first and second surface." The Examiner further states that "[i]t appears the overlay is attachable to the first or second surface."

Claim 17 has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion.

The Examiner notes that in Claims 25-27, the phrase "the retroreflective sheeting" lacks antecedent basis.

Claims 25-27 have been amended to depend from dependent Claim 24, which provides antecedent basis for "the retroreflective sheeting."

Finally, the Examiner states that "[i]t is unclear if the 'back side' recited in Claim 31 is referencing the 'first surface' previously recited in claim 23."

Claim 31 has been amended to recite "removably attaching the overlay to the second side of the main body" in accordance with the amendment to independent Claim 23.

Accordingly, it is believed that all pending claims fully comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected Claims 17 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sarkisian *et al.* (U.S. Patent 5,675,923).

Sarkisian *et al.* disclose a rigid sign member 12 having a changeable protective plastic overlay 14. The transparent overlay member 14 is preferably a clear plastic sheet with a message or display indicia 16 positioned on one side thereof.

Claim 17 has been amended to recite that the overlay is removably attachable to a first surface in a first position or a second surface in a second position of the main body. Support for this limitation is found on page 2, lines 7-9 and lines 13-17, and page 5, lines 28 and 29 of the originally filed patent application. The overlay in one embodiment of the present invention is removably attachable to either a first surface of the main body, for example, a front surface, or a second surface of the main body, for example, a back surface or storage position. Thus, when the overlay is not in use, it can be stored on the second surface of the main body.

It is respectfully submitted that Sarkisian *et al.* do not disclose a sign having a first surface and a second surface, and a overlay removably attachable to the first surface in a first position or the second surface in a second position. Although Sarkisian *et al.* disclose storage pockets on the back of the sign for storage of a blocker overlay or other blocker overlays when they are not needed (see column 6, lines 45-47), it is respectfully submitted that the overlays are not removably attachable to the second or back side of the sign.

Accordingly, it is believed that Claim 17 recites patentable subject matter over Sarkisian *et al.* Claim 21 depends directly from independent Claim 17 and thus includes the aforementioned patentable distinction over Sarkisian *et al.*

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected Claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sarkisian *et al.* in view of Dinan *et al.* (U.S. Patent 5,212,898).

Claim 20 recites that the main body includes a plurality of hollow cells. It is respectfully submitted that Dinan *et al.* do not disclose a plurality of hollow cells within the main body. The base sheets 11 and 12 are disclosed to be large, flat, and semi-rigid (column 2, lines 52-64). These base sheets 11 and 12 are attached to a vertical pole 20 by lower brackets 21 and upper hardware 41 and 42. At best, the design in Dinan *et al.* has one hollow main section, *i.e.*, the space between the base sheets 11 and 12.

In contrast, the main body 12 of the sign in the present invention can be a multi-celled walled panel providing a strong, lightweight structure similar to a honeycomb structure (see Figures 3, 9, and 10 of the present application).

Accordingly, the rejection is respectfully traversed since the combination of Sarkisian *et al.* and Dinan *et al.* do not teach all of the limitations of Claim 20.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-10, 12-14, 18, 19, 22, and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sarkisian *et al.* in view of Cordola *et al.* (U.S. Patent 5,173,026).

Independent Claims 1, 22, and 32 have each been amended to recite that the overlay is removably attachable to a first surface of the main body in a first position or a second surface in a second position of the main body.

Cordola *et al.* disclose a clip for fixing a panel 17 to a support 18 in which the clip includes a body 1 having a head 2 adapted to be mounted to the panel through an orifice 19, a foot 3 adapted to be mounted to the support through an orifice 20, and a flange at the place where the foot 3 and the head 2 merge. A relatively soft plastic material washer cooperates with the flange 4 to provide a seal with the support.

However, Cordola *et al.* do not teach or suggest having an overlay removably attachable to a first surface in a first position of a main body or a second surface in a second position of the main body. Accordingly, the rejection with respect to Claims 1-10, 12-14, 18, 19, 22, and 32 is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner rejected Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) "as being unpatentable over Sarkisian in view of Cordola, and further in view of the admitted prior art (APA)."

Claim 11 depends directly from independent Claim 1 and thus includes the limitations that patentably distinguish over Sarkisian *et al.* and Cordola *et al.* The teaching on page 7 of the specification of the present application does not remedy the deficiencies of Sarkisian *et al.* and Cordola *et al.*, and thus this rejection is believed to be overcome.

The Examiner rejected Claims 15, 16, 23-28, 30, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) "as being unpatentable over Sarkisian in view of Cordola, and further in view of Dinan *et al.*"

Claim 15 depends directly from Claim 1 and recites the limitation of "a plurality of hollow cells within the main body." It is respectfully submitted that these references, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose a plurality of hollow cells within the main body. Accordingly, the rejection with respect to Claim 15 is traversed.

Independent Claim 16 recites a main body having a first surface and a second surface and a plurality of hollow cells within the main body. As noted above, it is respectfully submitted that Sarkisian *et al.* in view of Cordola *et al.* and further in view of Dinan *et al.* do not disclose the main

body having a plurality of hollow cells. Accordingly, the rejection with respect to Claim 16 is traversed.

Independent Claim 23 also recites a main body having a plurality of hollow cells, and thus the rejection with respect to Claim 23 is traversed for the same reason.

Claims 24-28, 30, and 31 all depend directly or indirectly from Claim 23, and thus include the patentable distinctions noted above.

The Examiner rejected Claim 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sarkisian *et al.* in view of Cordola *et al.*, in view of Dinan *et al.*, and further in view of the admitted prior art (APA).

Claim 29 depends directly from Claim 23, and thus includes the patentable distinctions noted above.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: February 3, 2003

MARKED UP VERSION OF AMENDMENTSClaim Amendments Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)(1)(ii)

1. (Amended) A sign comprising:

 a main body having a first surface and a second surface;

 an overlay removably attachable to the first surface in a first position or the second surface in a second position of the main body; and

 at least two fasteners attached to the overlay for removably securing the overlay to the first surface or the second surface, each fastener passing through an oversized hole in the overlay and movably secured to the overlay with a washer, each washer spacing the overlay from the main body when the overlay is attached to the main body.

16. (Amended) A sign comprising:

 a main body having a first surface and a second surface and a plurality of hollow cells within the main body;

 an overlay removably attachable to the first surface in a first position or the second surface in a second position of the main body; and

 at least two fasteners attached to the overlay for removably securing the overlay to the main body, each fastener passing through an oversized hole in the overlay and movably secured to the overlay with a washer, each washer spacing the overlay from the main body when the overlay is attached to the main body; wherein each fastener includes an expandable shank that deforms when passing through a hole in the main body and expands after passing through the hole to removably secure the overlay to the main body.

17. (Amended) A sign comprising:

 a main body having a first surface and a second surface;

 an overlay removably attachable to the first surface in a first position [and] or the second surface in a second position of the main body; and

at least two fasteners for removably securing the overlay to the first surface and the second surface.

22. (Amended) A sign comprising:

a main body having a first surface and a second surface;

an overlay removably attachable to [at least] the first surface in a first position or the second surface in a second position of the main body; and

at least two fasteners for removably securing the overlay to the first surface, each fastener passing through an oversized hole in the overlay and movably secured to the overlay with a washer.

23. (Amended) A method of providing an overlay on a sign comprising:

forming a main body having a first surface, a second surface, and a plurality of hollow cells within the main body; and

removably attaching an overlay to the first surface in a first position or the second surface in a second position of the main body with at least two fasteners attached to the overlay, each fastener passing through an oversized hole in the overlay and movably secured to the overlay with a washer, each washer spacing the overlay from the main body when the overlay is attached to the main body.

25. (Amended) The method of Claim [23] 24, wherein the retroreflective sheeting includes a plurality of air-backed cube-corner prisms.

26. (Amended) The method of Claim [23] 24, wherein the retroreflective sheeting includes a plurality of cube-corner prisms each having three facets extending to an apex, wherein substantially all of the facets have a reflective coating thereon.

27. (Amended) The method of Claim [23] 24, further comprising providing a barrier film between the overlay and the retroreflective sheeting.

31. (Amended) The method of Claim 23, further comprising removably attaching the overlay to [a back side] the second side of the main body.
32. (Amended) A method of providing an overlay on a sign comprising:
forming a main body having a first surface and a second surface; and
removably attaching an overlay to the first surface in a first position or the second surface in a second position of the main body with at least two fasteners attached to the overlay, each fastener passing through an oversized hole in the overlay and movably secured to the overlay with a washer, each washer spacing the overlay from the main body when the overlay is attached to the main body.